HISTORIAN'S OFFICE
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840.]

"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."—MATT. 1: 23.

No. 51, Vol. LXVI. Thursday, December 22, 1904. Price One Penny.

EUROPEAN MISSION HEADQUARTERS,
10 HOLLY ROAD, FAIRFIELD, LIVERPOOL.

WITNESSES FOR CHRIST.

BY ELDER NEPHI ANDERSON.

One of the stock arguments against the divinity of Christ is that His teachings are not original with Him, but that He simply gathered and re-adjusted the teachings of the heathen nations around Him.

Quite recently, August 29th, 1904, the newpapers had the following telegraphic communication from Chicago, U.S.A.:

"Tracing the greatest truth of the Christian religion to an origin in the beliefs of heathen nations, and expressing the opinion that many of the writings of the Bible are not inspired products of their attributed authors, Professor John Pentland Mahaffy, governor of the University of Dublin, has delivered the convocation sermon to the University of Chicago graduating class in Mandel hall.

"Dr. Mahaffy used for his subject, 'What Does Christianity Owe to the Jews?'

"The doctrines of the trinity and the incarnation were imported from primitive peoples," the speaker said. "The trinity comes from the documents of the Egyptians and Indians, and the incarnation from Buddhism. It is remarkable that the notion of sacrifice appears not only in the religions of all civilized nations, but also in the lower races, commonly called heathen and primitive, and whose notions of religion were very crude.

"Christianity is not a new thing, but it is the gathering of all the great truths and the weaving of them into the glorious texture of Christian faith."

The lecturer expresses the opinion of many people on this subject. Mrs. Besant, the theosophist, claims that "All that is fair and beautiful in Christian morality had been taught in the world ages before Christ was born." The Chinese come with their Confucius, who proclaimed the golden rule in almost the indentical form as it is found in the New Testament. "The good man loves all men. All within the four seas are his brothers. Love of man is chief of all the virtues," are sayings from the Chinese.

Believers in Buddhism present a long list of quotations from Buddha, which they claim was appropriated by Jesus. As samples the following are given:

"Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time. Hatred ceases by love. This is an ancient law. Let us live happily, not hating those who hate us. Among men who hate us let us live free from hatred. Let us overcome anger by love. Let him overcome evil by good. Let him overcome the greedy by liberality; let the liar be overcome by the truth. Let him speak the truth, let him not yield to anger, let him give when asked, even from the little that he has. By these things he will enter heaven. The real treasure is that laid up through charity and piety, temperance, and self-control; the treasure thus hid is secured, and passes not away."

In speaking of the religion of the Hindus, at the Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago in 1893, the Rev. M. Slater, from India, said: "The idea of the need of sacrificial acts is ingrained in the whole system of Vedic Hinduism. A sense of original corruption has been felt by all classes of Hindus, as indicated by the prayer: 'I am sinful, I commit sin, my nature is sinful. Save

me, O thou lotus-eyed Hari, the remover of sin.' The first man after the deluge, whom the Hindus called Manu and the Hebrews Noah, offered burnt offering. No literature, not even the Jewish, contains so many words relating to sacrifice as Sanskrit.

"The secret of the great importance attached to sacrifice is to be found in the remarkable fact that the authorship of the institution is attributed to 'Creation's Lord' himself, and its date is reckoned as coeval with the creation. The idea exists in the three chief Vedas and in the Brahmanas and Upanishads that Prajapati, 'the lord and supporter of his creatures'—the Purnsha (primeval male)—begotten before the world, becoming half immortal and half mortal in a body fit for sacrifice, offered himself for the devas (emancipated mortals), and for the benefit of the world, thereby making all subsequent sacrifice a reflection or figure of himself."

Centuries before Christ Grecian philosophers taught many sublime truths. Socrates and Plato advanced many doctrines that the Christian can accept. "It is not right to return an injury." "Holding the soul to be immortal and able to bear all good and evil alike, we shall always persevere in the road that leads upward," are sayings credited to Plato. From the Persian we have: "Do as you would be done by." "Immodest looks are sins. To think evil is to sin." "In always doing of good works be diligent, that it may come to thy assistance in the heavens."

The Jews claim that all necessary truth is contained in the Old Testament and the Talmud. "Whosoever is quick in forgiving, his sins shall be forgiven." "With the measure with which a man measures, men will measure to him," are samples from the Talmud, which book also contains parables very much like those which Christ spoke.

At first glance, all these quotations from sources prior to the Christian era, seem to support the claims of the infidel, but a closer examination into the facts will prove that instead of being witnesses against Christ, they are among the strongest witnesses for Him. Christian writers have met the unbelievers' arguments that truth is eternal, and the same, whether presented by Buddha, or Moses, or Christ; and the fact that Jesus necessarily repeated some of these moral principles, does not disprove His claim to the divine Being that He was. Whittier writes:

"In Vedic verse, in dull Koran
Are messages of good to man;
The angels to our Aryan sires
Talked by the earliest household fires;
The prophets of the elder day,
The slant-eyed sages of Cathay
Read not the riddle all amiss
Of higher life evolved from this,
Nor need it lessen what He taught,
Or make the Gospel Jesus brought
Less precious that His lips retold
Some portion of the truth of old
Confirming with His own impress
The common law of righteousness."

But the full explanations of these seeming anachronisms has not been

arrived at by most Christian writers on this subject. Some have presented it, but more in a suggestive manner than in plain statements. One writer puts it in this way:

"What theory will cover these facts as well as the doctrine of a 'primitive revelation'? If we admit on the authority of the Bible that God revealed Himself originally to man, the knowledge of the divine attributes and functions possessed by the ancient Hindus would be a reminiscence." "Two things are evident: that the higher we push our enquiries into the ancient religion of India, the purer and simpler we find the conception of God, and that in proportion as we come down the stream of time the more corrupt and complex it becomes." Along this same line of thought a Jewish writer points out that the traffic which once existed between Phœnicia on the west and China and India on the east, brought Jewish doctrine eastward, so that Jewish thought had its influence on the Oriental faiths. "There is a legend," says the writer, "that, when Adam and Eve were turned out of Eden, or earthly paradise, an angel smashed the gates, and the fragments flying all over the earth are the precious stones. We carry the legend further. The precious stones were picked up by the various religions and philosophers of the world. Each claimed and claims that its own fragment alone reflects the light of heaven, forgetting the settings and incrustations which time has added."

Let us consider, then, this thought of a "primitive revelation," and carry it out to a definite conclusion. Christ, when He came in the meridian of time, spoke "as one having authority and not as the scribes." He did not go about seeking the truth from men; rather the truth sprang from Him as water from a fountain. As a boy we find Him in the temple with the learned, grey-haired doctors of the law, and His explanations and comments were so startling that *He might have been the Author of the law!* He does not hesitate, He is not confused, He knows whereof He speaks. Every word, every act, bears the stamp of authority.

At the feast of Cana "The conscious water saw its God and blushed"—and the water was turned into wine. He feeds thousands with a few loaves and fishes. He commands the waves of the sea to be calm, and He is obeyed. He heals the sick. He raises the dead to life again. "I lay down my life, that I might take it again." He says, "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again"—and He proves His assertion by allowing wicked men to slay Him. He is laid in the tomb, and on the third day He rises again to life and immortality.

Who is this Being, and how is all this explained?

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

"The same was in the beginning with God.

"All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."

" . . . And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth."

This, then, is the secret, that Jesus Christ is the Lord of life, the Creator of the heaven and the earth and all things that in them are. He is the Alpha and the Omega. "He comprehendeth all things, and all things are before Him, and all things are round about Him: and He is above all things, and is through all things, and is round about all things; and all things are by Him, and of Him, even God, for ever and ever." "The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land." "He hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

Christ was before Plato, before Confucius, before Buddha, before Abraham, before Adam. He was the Light by which they all come into the world, and the Light that quickened their understandings and made them to see the truth. He revealed to men, even to Adam in the beginning the eternal principles of the Gospel. And so also was this Gospel taught to Abraham and to the children of Israel. Paul says, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea.

"And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

"And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them (or went with them): and that Rock was Christ."

The Prophet Nephi also bears witness to this fact. He says: "And the God of our fathers who were led out of Egypt, out of bondage, and also were preserved in the wilderness by Him; yea, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, yieldeth Himself, according to the words of the angel, as a man, into the hands of wicked men to be lifted up," etc. (I Nephi xix: 10).

The Book of Mormon also tells more plainly that the doctrines of Christ were preached to men in different ages of the world. Moroni writes as follows, speaking of God's dealings with the ancients:

"And behold, there were divers ways in which He did manifest things unto the children of men, which were good; and all things which are good cometh of Christ."

Alma, also, in speaking of the creation, the fall of man, and the plan of redemption prepared by God, bears this testimony (Alma xii.)

"And after God had appointed that these things should come unto man, behold, then he saw that it was expedient that man should know concerning the things whereof he had appointed unto them;

"Therefore he sent angels to converse with them, who caused men to behold of his glory.

"And they began from that time forth to call on his name; therefore God conversed with men, and made known unto them the plan of redemption, which had been prepared from the foundation of the world; and this he made known unto them according to their faith and repentance, and their holy works; . . . .

"But God did call on men, in the name of his Son, (this being the plan of redemption which was laid,) saying, If ye will repent, and harden not your hearts, then will I have mercy upon you, through mine only begotten Son."

Nephi, in speaking on this subject says, in the eighth chapter of Heleman:

"And now, behold, Moses did not only testify of these things, but also all the holy prophets, from his days, even to the days of Abraham.

"Yea, and behold, Abraham saw of His coming, and was filled with gladness and did rejoice.

"Yea, and I say unto you, that Abraham not only knew of these things, but there were many before the days of Abraham who were called by the order of God; yea, after the order of His Son; and this that it should be shown unto the people a great many thousand years before His coming, that even redemption should come unto them."

These quotations are significant as showing that the doctrines of Christ were taught to men in the early ages, even before the times of Abraham. This, then, accounts for the truths of the Gospel and the teaching of a Redeemer being found among all nations. These principles had a common origin, but having come down to us through varied sources and the ignorance and superstitions of the nations, they have partaken of the corruption through which they have passed; and yet they shine out as gleams of divine truth amid the night of error.

The Word which was in the beginning with God, and which was God, came to the earth and was made flesh. Had the truths which He enunciated not been in harmony with the truth of all ages, there might have been doubts of His divinity; but the fact that Christ's teachings did not come in conflict with any truth known to have been taught by the wise men of all nations, simply shows that the Source of life and light and truth did not contradict Himself. Therefore, the wise sayings of all times and nations are witnesses for Christ.

CHRIST IS KING.

By the believer in the Gospel of the Redeemer, no truth is held more firmly than this, that the Lord shall ultimately become the acknowledged sovereign on earth, as He is in heaven. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." This is the divine decree, which no opposition on earth, or from the depths below, can change. The principles taught by the Redeemer will finally be applied to all human affairs—to the home, to education, to business, to politics, to government. Christ shall be king in the family circle, in society, in centers of commerce, in the judicial, legislative, and administrative halls, and all men will "bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all." This is one of the truths that shines forth with dazzling brilliancy from the pages of holy writ, as a star of the first magnitude in the firmament. But we are commanded to be subject to "the powers that be" until He comes.

The skeptic would perhaps say that there are no signs of a speedy change for the better in our world-conditions. He would point to the ever increasing unrest among the masses of the people. The gulf between capital and labor seems to be widening instead of filling up. On the slightest provocation, there are strikes with violence and bad blood. People are drifting away from the churches, and, in many instances, becoming enemies of religion. They are drifting away from the lofty ideal declared on the Mount by our Savior Himself.

There is a scramble for wealth and power, in which one regards another with the brutal indifference that is displayed in a stampede out of a burning theater. Extravagant notions of life, intemperate thirst for amusement, hunger for show and parade consume the very souls of the people, instead of that hunger and thirst for righteousness which can be satisfied. Where, then, is there in all the world a sign of the coming of the Son of Man, or His kingdom? Is this event not so far away as to have no interest to this generation?

The very conditions briefly touched upon are one of the signs that His coming is not so far off as many believe. The Scriptures teach us that the second advent of the Lord will follow a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." Looking around us, how can we escape the impression that the elements of trouble are put into commotion—that a time is coming in which the passions, the frenzy of mankind will know no bounds, and before which all law and order, and all human institutions will go down? That is needed to demonstrate the utter impotency of the wisdom of man to bring salvation, either through science or art. And when that is realized, man will be prepared to accept God's salvation through His Son.

The world in general may not take much interest in these things, but to the Saints of the Most High the signs of the times are most portentous. They speak of the coming "troubles," in which men's hearts will fail them, but also of the coming of "the desire of all nations," to save "the remnant." Then the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth, Messiah shall reign supreme, and with Him those who have been faithful to Him. This is God's world, and He will surely claim it. Even the clouds that occasionally dim the sky are part of the plan of redemption. David is anointed king, even if he is in exile, and the agitation for Ishboseth, the Son of Saul, the enemy of Israel, does not change the decree. The Church of Christ never was on the retreat. Its course was always onward and forward, and shall ever be, until the redeemed multitudes of the world shall join with one heart and one voice in the shout of victory; "Hallelujah! for the Lord omnipotent reigneth. Hallelujah! The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever. Amen."—*Deseret News.*

Miss Helen Keller, the blind and deaf mute who has been able to acquire knowledge in so wonderful a way, recently wrote on her typewriter the beautiful words which follow:

"Everything has its wonders, even darkness and silence, and I learn whatever state I may be in therein to be content. Sometimes, it is true, a sense of isolation enfolds me like a cold mist as I sit alone and wait at life's shut gate. Beyond, there is light and music and sweet companionship; but I may not enter. Fate, silent, pitiless—bars the way. Fain would I question His imperious decree, for my heart is still undisciplined and passionate; but my heart will not utter the bitter, futile words that rise to my lips, and they fall back into my heart like unshed tears. Silence sits immense upon my soul. Then comes Hope with a smile and whispers, 'There is joy in self-forgetfulness.' So I try to make the light in others' eyes my sun, the music in others' ears my symphony, the smile on others' lips my happiness."

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1904.

EDITORIAL

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

CHRISTMAS! Although the word does not indicate the true meaning of the occasion which it is meant to celebrate, and it is also very probable that the birth of Christ did not occur on the twenty-fifth of December, yet the Latter-day Saints join with all Christian people in celebrating the advent, in the flesh, of the Lord and Master to this world. The season is one of rejoicing in all lands where the name of Christ is known and revered, and it is a period when hearts go out in thanks to God, the giver of all good gifts; for, after all, the greatest gift which man has received is the promise of eternal life which the Father has sent by His Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Christ came in the meridian of time to this earth in the same way that all of us have come—as a child, born into immortality; but that was not His beginning. In the eternal worlds He lived and worked with His Father, under His Father's direction. "By Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist."

He was "in the beginning with God." He stood in the councils of the Almighty. He was the beloved Son that stood by His Father and said, "Father, Thy will be done, and the glory be Thine forever." Even at that time He was the "Only Begotten," chosen from the beginning, willing to be submissive to His Father's authority in all things, willing to work for the salvation of His fellows even to the laying down of the life which should be given Him, and thus becoming the "Lamb slain before the foundation of the world."

We know but little of that pre-existent state, wherein the Father and the Son worked in the creation of this world and all things that upon it are; we have but glimpses now and then, just enough to lead the eye of faith into the sublimity of the time. Then, when the earth had become a fit abode for man, and the spiritual children of God tabernacled upon it, we find the Lord operating among them, and especially manifesting Himself to the patriarchs of the race and the Chosen people. He was the "Spiritual Rock" that went

with the children of Israel in the wilderness. He manifested His spiritual personality to the brother of Jared on the Western continent.

When the righteous Nephites were looking with faith for His coming, and were being threatened with death by their enemies, the voice of the Lord came to the supplicating Nephi as follows: "Lift up your head and be of good cheer, for behold the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world that I will fulfill all that I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of all my holy prophets."

And so the time drew near. What took place in the courts of heaven when the Prince of Peace went forth, we may not know, but

On Ephrath's plain that night the shepherds lay
Watching their flocks of sheep. O'er that same land,
The alien Ruth had gleaned in Boaz's field.
Here David also once had watched his father's sheep.
Historic ground was this, and laden with
Rich memories of Israel history.
Lo! what is this? Have angels as of old
Descended out of heaven? See the light
Around that wondrous being! Yea, it is
An angel of the Lord! The shepherds shrink
With fear, and trembled, being sore afraid.

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

"And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

"And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

"And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger."

In manger rude, enwrapped in swaddling clothes,
A new-born Infant lay. Helpless was He
As any babe that needs its mother's care;
And yet, the great I AM was incarnate
In that small form of flesh, and bone, and blood.
Oh, wondrous tale! Oh, simple truth divine!
To know that Christ the Lord had come from out
The presence of the Father—sent to earth
To show the way by which weak, fallen man
Could once again obtain his lost estate.

Children of earthly kings in palaces
Are born, and clothed in raiments soft and warm;
But here was the great King of kings. Mansions
Hold earthly lords; but here was Lord of lords.
And those who hold possessions wide and broad
Of earthly soil, in stately structures dwell;
But here was One who heaven and earth had made.
When earthly potentates with regal train
Come to their castles, all the royal court
Go out and bid the monarch welcome home;
But here was nature's God come to His own.
All living things—all elements of earth,
His hand had taken from the primal source
And fashioned into form. 'Tis meet
That earthly age should reverence be shown;
Yet here was One whose goings forth had been
From everlasting. What more fitting, then,
That angels sing and shepherds join the song,
And men from east and west and north and south
Bring greetings to the new-born Christ and King.

JOSEPH THE PROPHET.

To-MORROW, December 23rd, is the ninty-ninth anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Joseph Smith; and at this season of the year, when we are commemorating the advent of the Master in the flesh, it is also well that we should bear in mind that Master's great latter-day Prophet and Seer, whom God sent to usher in the dispensation of the fullness of times, and to begin the "marvelous work and a wonder" among the children of men.

In this connection the following description of the Prophet's personal appearance in manhood from the pen of Parley P. Pratt, is of interest.

"President Joseph Smith was in person tall and well built, strong and active; of a light complexion, light hair, blue eyes, very little beard, and of an expression peculiar to himself, on which the eye naturally rested with interest, and was never weary of beholding. His countenance was ever mild, affable, beaming with intelligence and benevolence; mingled with a look of interest and an unconscious smile, or cheerfulness, and entirely free from all restraint or affectation of gravity; and there was something connected with the serene and steady penetrating glance of his eye, as if he would penetrate the deepest abyss of the human heart, gaze into eternity, penetrate the heavens and comprehend all worlds.

"He possessed a noble boldness and independence of character; his manner was easy and familiar; his rebuke terrible as a lion; his benevolence unbounded as the ocean; his intelligence universal, and his language abounding in original eloquence peculiar to himself—not polished—not studied—not smoothed and softened by education and refined by art; but flowing forth in its own native simplicity, and profusely abounding in variety of subject and manner. He interested and edified, while, at the same time, he amused and

entertained his audience; and none listened to him who were ever weary with his discourse. I have even known him to retain a congregation of willing and anxious listeners for many hours together, in the midst of cold or sunshine, rain or wind, while they were laughing at one moment and weeping the next. Even his most bitter enemies were generally overcome, if he could once get their ears. . . .

"In short, in him the characters of a Daniel and a Cyrus were wonderfully blended. The gifts, wisdom and devotion of a Daniel were united with the boldness, courage, temperance, perseverance and generosity of a Cyrus. And had he been spared a martyr's fate till mature manhood age, he was certainly endowed with powers and ability to have revolutionized the world in many respects, and to have transmitted to posterity a name associated with more brilliant and glorious acts than has yet fallen to the lot of mortal. As it is, his works will live to endless ages, and unnumbered millions yet unborn will mention his name with honor, as a noble instrument in the hands of God, who, during his short and useful career, laid the foundation of that kingdom spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, which should break in pieces all other kingdoms and stand forever."

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

We hope our readers will be pleased with the illustration of 10 Holly Road, the new headquarters of the European mission, which is presented in this number of the Star. During the next volume which begins January 5, 1905, we shall give half tone portraits of the First Presidency, the quorum of the Twelve, and other leading Elders of Zion and in the mission field, with brief biographical sketches of each. We are sure this new feature will especially please the Saints in Great Britain who have not the privilege of coming in personal contact with these men. As there is sure to be an increased demand for the next volume of the Star, the conference presidents and the Elders will kindly make their canvass for subscribers as soon as possible, and send the number required to this office. We feel assured, also, that an earnest effort on the part of those who are and should be interested in the Star will add materially to the subscription list. Every new reader secured is one more soul brought under the influence of the Gospel and the Spirit that leads unto truth.

N. A.

President Heber J. Grant has called a meeting of all conference presidents in Great Britain to meet at 10 Holly Road, Liverpool, December 31st, 1904, and January 1st, 1905, at which matters pertaining to the welfare of the mission will be considered. The first meeting is called for Saturday, December 31st, 1904, at 3 p.m.

We learn by cablegram that Elder H. S. Goddard died in Salt Lake City, December 14th, 1904. For the past two years Elder Goddard had been studying and teaching music in Europe. Recently he left England to fill some concert engagements in America. His wife and little son sailed from Liverpool homeward, December 21st. The Saints and Elders will miss Brother

Goddard's genial face. He was always a willing worker, and cheerfully gave his assistance to the work of the Lord. We condole with Sister Goddard and her son, and pray that God's comforting Spirit may be with them in their sorrow.

DEPARTURES.—The following missionaries sailed from Liverpool for Boston per s.s. *Devonian*, December 10, 1904: Anton L. Skanchy, late President of the Scandinavian mission, Victor V. Phillips, George S. Smith, G. Howard Beard, William H. Reeder, Jr., Conrad Stutznegger, Stephen S. Buckwalter, Peter L. Anderson, Lars P. Larsen, James C. Johnson, Hans J. Hansen, John Spande, George F. Evans, Herbert Van Dam, Jr., John Buehler, William L. Porter. Twenty-two Saints were with the company, which was in charge of Elder Skanchy.

NOTES FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

PRESIDENT LOFTER BJARNASON writes from Iceland as follows:

"During the months of October and November we revisited the homes of forty strangers, had fifty Gospel conversations, distributed fifty-one tracts, sold twenty-three books, and loaned two. Held six well-attended indoor meetings, which were in every way a grand success.

"During our stay in Vestmanneyjar we had so won the hearts of the people that many expressed their regrets at seeing us depart. Although we did not make many converts there, we did make a host of friends, and several are earnestly investigating the Gospel.

"We returned to Reykjavik November 21st, and since then we have been busy preparing tracts for publication. At present we are preparing a small tract written by a native investigator, who, for the last two years, has made 'Mormonism' a special study. His article is an appeal to the Icelandic people to make the subject of 'Mormonism' a matter of careful study. He also refutes many of the falsehoods which a Danish pastor, by the name of Mattaisen, has written about our people. We hope that this tract might be the means of doing some good."

THE BRISTOL CONFERENCE.

THE Elders of the Bristol conference of the Church convened in Priesthood meeting at 27 St. George's Place, Cheltenham, at 6:30 p.m., on Saturday, December, 17th, 1904. There were present, President Heber J. Grant of the European mission, President Briant Stringham and all the traveling Elders of the Bristol conference.

The Elders gave in their reports for the past five months' work, showing an average of 585 tracts and 10 books distributed, and 53 Gospel conversations per Elder per month. President Grant gave them many valuable instructions and some good advice.

The semi-annual Bristol conference commenced next day at the same place at 10:30 a.m. After the opening exercises President Stringham presented the general authorities of the Church, and they were unanimously sustained.

Elder Benjamin F. Cluff spoke on the first principles of the Gospel. Elder Albert F. Richins said that all blessings came through obeying the principles of the Gospel. Elder John W. B. Young bore his testimony and was pleased to be in the mission field. Elder William P. Davidson said that if the people of the world would judge the Latter-day Saints by their fruits, as the Savior said, they would know that we were keeping the commandments of God.

President Heber J. Grant then spoke, encouraging the Saints to live their religion and thereby gain the blessings of the Lord. This would also help the Elders to spread the Gospel. Advised them to teach it to their friends on every favorable occasion, and to get the spirit of love for their fellow men.

At the afternoon meeting Elder Samuel E. McKean said he could say with Paul that he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it was the power of God unto salvation to all those that believe. Elder John Y. Walker spoke upon salvation for the dead, and told of the Savior preaching to the spirits in prison. Elder Frederick Barker spoke on the restoration of the everlasting Gospel. Elder Robert C. Kelly said that the Gospel was for every one, and that they must obey the Savior in order to gain salvation. Elder Charles Pocook was pleased that he had accepted the Gospel in his youth and had gathered to Zion, and that he now had been counted worthy to come back and preach it to his fellow-countrymen.

President Heber J. Grant said many people wish to have a personal testimony of the Gospel, but most of them are not willing to put forth the effort required in time, study, prayer, and reformation of life in order to gain a testimony. Jesus Christ has laid down the plan whereby mankind can be saved, and we must follow this plan in order to gain salvation, for God is no respecter of persons. Gave a number of examples which clearly showed this to be true. He also spoke briefly on the personality of God.

At the evening meeting Elder Heber I. Burningham spoke on the subject that a man must be called of God, as was Aaron, in order to have authority to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof. Elder Robert S. Smith spoke upon the first principles of the Gospel, showing that if we would obey them and live faithful lives, we would know of the doctrines, whether they were of God or man.

President Briant Stringham expressed his pleasure at meeting with the Saints and Elders in conference. Bore testimony that the Gospel with all its powers had been restored again to the earth.

President Grant said that the Latter-day Saints teach the Gospel that is found in the Bible, believing the Bible is in very deed a divinely inspired record; and that all objections to it can be met and overturned by evidence in its favor. We believe that the Savior has atoned for the original sin of mankind, and that people must answer for their own sin only. He bore testimony that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and admonished the people to study what he has done and the principles he has left us. Said that all true Latter-day Saints carry their religion into their daily lives. In closing, he left his testimony with the Saints.

A good spirit prevailed throughout the meetings. A large number of investigators were present at the evening meeting.

FREDERICK BARKER, Clerk of Conference.

CURRENT COMMENT.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.

A LITTLE girl was standing one very cold morning in one of the poorer districts of Edinburgh, waiting among the other poor children to gain admittance into a hall where a meal was to be given them. The poor girl shivered violently and tried in vain to keep her bare feet warm. A ragged little urchin who was standing near, observed her, and taking off his cap and laying it at her feet whispered, "Here lassie, stand on my bonnet till the door opens."

STREET PREACHING IN NEW YORK.

A TELEGRAPHIC dispatch from New York, dated November 22, to the American newspapers, announces the following item of news: "Through an ordinance which has just gone into effect, it will be necessary hereafter for a missionary, church, or religious society wishing to hold religious services in a street or public place in this city to obtain the consent of the aldermen of the district in which the meeting is to be held before a license from the mayor can be had. Opposition to street meetings held by 'Mormon' missionaries in Harlem is said to have caused the introduction of the new ordinance."

BIBLES IN JAPAN.

THE American Bible society has recently received a number of interesting communications from its agent in Japan, Rev. Mr. Loomis, showing the remarkable opportunity that is open for doing good among the wounded soldiers. Mr. Loomis writes: "I am now much interested in the work among the sick and wounded soldiers. Last week I spent two days visiting the hospitals in Tokio. I went also again yesterday. We have now donated more than thirty-two thousand Testaments and Gospels to the Japanese soldiers, and the most of them have gone to the sick and wounded in the hospitals. It is reported that there are already forty-five thousand and more are coming all the time. A request has come this morning for five thousand. The applicant writes, 'Soldiers are begging for them.' Another missionary, to whom I had sent five hundred copies, writes, 'The soldiers are very glad to receive them, and are very ready, in many cases, eager, to be instructed.'"—*Boston Transcript.*

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ON CHILDREN AND THE HOME.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT made a speech at the opening of a new school building at Washington, U.S.A., November 20th, 1904, in which he made the following remarks on children and the home:

"I wish to say that I am especially glad to see the children present. You know, I believe in children. I want to see enough of them and of the right kind. I wish to-day, in the very brief remarks that I have to make, to dwell upon this thought—the thought that ought to be in the mind of every man and woman here—the thought that while in this country we need wise laws, honestly and fearlessly executed, and while we cannot afford to tolerate anything but the highest standard in the public service of the government, yet that in the last analysis the future of the country must depend upon the quality of the individual home, of the individual man or woman in that home. The future of this country depends upon the way in which the average man

and the average woman in it does his or her duty, and that very largely depends upon the way in which the average boy or girl is brought up. Therefore, a peculiar responsibility rests upon those whose lifework it is to see to the spiritual welfare of our people, and upon those who make it their lifework to try to train the citizens of the future so that they shall be worthy of that future."

AT A STREET MEETING.

ELDER B—— and his wife were doing missionary work in England. One evening as the Elder was addressing a large number of people on the street corner, Sister B—— stood in the crowd with the other listeners.

"The preacher is from Utah," said a strange lady to Sister B ——.

"Is he?" she replied.

"Yes; and he is a Mormon."

"Indeed?"

"He must be a bad man, though I must say that he doesn't look like one.'

"Don't you think so?"

"Look at his pleasant face and fine bearing. He is quite a smart chap—but our girls would do well to beware of him. These Mormons, you know, are only after our girls.

"I beg your pardon, but you are mistaken in that."

"Do you know the Mormons?"

"Yes, many of them."

"Do you know this one?"

"Indeed I do. He is my husband."

HABIT-BREAKING AND HABIT-MAKING.

THERE is an Eastern story of a fly that lighted on the edge of Abdallah's goblet, took a sip, and flew away. It came again, and as it was not brushed away it grew bolder and bolder. With each sip the fly became larger, and at last Abdallah perceived that it was a man. He began to eat Abdallah's meat. The youth drove him away, but he came again, wearing beautiful clothes. One day Abdallah was found lying dead, his face black, and on his throat the print of a mighty finger, as large as a man's hand. The fly had become a giant.

That is a picture of the ease and rapidity with which bad habits grow. And after they are fixed upon us, it is the hardest thing in the world to uproot them.

Dr. Peloubet tells of an old tavern that was changed to a dwelling house, the bar-room being transferred into a parlor. The building was used as a dwelling for twenty years, but even at the end of that time, if the parlor were kept closed for a few days, it would smell of the old rum and tobacco.

A father once taught his son this lesson: "Drive a nail into this board, John," he commanded, and the boy obeyed. "Now pull it out again." The boy did so. "Now, John, *pull out the hole.*" Ah, you may think you have conquered a habit, pulled it up by the root; but the hole is there, and it is so easy to fall into the old ways.

Endless patience is needed, if we would break off our bad habits.—A. R. WELLS, in *Christian Age.*

THE CARPENTER.

In a shop of Nazareth
Pungent cedar haunts the breath.
'Tis a low Eastern room,
Windowless, touched with gloom.
Workman's bench and simple tools
Line the walls. Chests and stools,
Yoke of ox, and shaft of plow,
Finished by the Carpenter,
Lie about the pavement now.

In the room the Craftsman stands,
Stands and reaches out His hands.

Let the shadows veil His face
If you must, and dimly trace
His workman's tunic, girt with bands
At His waist. But His hands—
Let the light play on them;
Marks of toil lay on them.
Paint with passion and with care
Every old scar showing there
Where a tool slipped and hurt;
Show each callous; be alert
For each deep line of toil,
Show the soil
Of the pitch; and the strength
Grip of helve gives at length.

When night comes, and I turn
From my shop where I earn
Daily bread, let me see
Those hard hands; know that He
Shared my lot, every bit;
Was a man, every whit.

Could I fear such a hand
Stretched toward me? Misunderstand
Or mistrust? Doubt that He
Meets me full in sympathy?
"Carpenter! hard like Thine
Is this hand—this of mine:
I reach out, gripping Thee,
Son of Man, close to me,
Close and fast, fearlessly."

—*British Weekly.*

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EDITED, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HEBER J. GRANT, 10 HOLLY ROAD,

LIVERPOOL:

FOR SALE IN ALL THE CONFERENCES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN GREAT BRITAIN.